

june | july 2012

# sonningcommon

magazine



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# From the editorial group

It is both fascinating and surprising to me, how each edition evolves into clear themes. In this issue we are looking forward and looking back, thanks to the range and variety of articles contributed by the editorial team and residents.

We look forward to the Jubilee, the Olympics, the development of the Skate Park and following the Design Day the process to contribute to future change in the village. If you will be celebrating the jubilee in any way please send photos and information, ready for the August/September magazine.

Looking back there is the history of the Thames Valley Gym, how FISH started, the origins of Sonning Common Garage and 20 years of the Charity Shop, alongside the many regular contributions and community news.

Please encourage your children/grandchildren to contact Anouska with anything they want to say.

*Diana*

**DIANA PEARMAN** Editor 2012

Email: [editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org](mailto:editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org)

PS...

Sonning Common Magazine is on sale at the village library in Grove Road for £1.50 a copy. Annual subscriptions are available for £15. Contact Geoffrey Adams. Email: [chairman@sonningcommonmagazine.org](mailto:chairman@sonningcommonmagazine.org) Phone: 0118 972 2134

Magazine contributions may be posted to: 1 Woodlands Road, Sonning Common RG4 9TD.

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# Community spirit ... people who smile...

**these were the two most commonly identified reasons for liking life in Sonning Common**

**These headline views were gained from the Design Day held in Sonning Common on Saturday 28 April. Despite a wet and cold day around 170 people visited the village hall and engaged in a variety of tasks in the morning; identifying likes and dislikes about the village; memory maps of where they live and the amenities close by; traffic concerns including parking; viewing the sites identified as possible building plots (poor weather prevented the surveys in situ) and developing a vision for the village in 2020. In the afternoon the consultants fed back the interim results to a large assembled audience.**

The day was a very good start to raising awareness and engaging many residents in a dialogue about the future developments that will take place. A key outcome is a real sense that most (but not all) of the participants have come to terms with the demands for new housing developments and

the resulting increase in population. Even more importantly, people are beginning to believe (not yet proven) that through the Neighbourhood Planning process we can make a difference to the design, quality and location of new houses. This is what people think should happen!

33 villagers signed up for further activities, mostly for the site evaluations (SON 1-14). Many more said they would be happy to volunteer once it was clear what exactly they would be required to do ...

The surveys will be short, sharp and thought provoking to provide key information that will enhance local control and influence.

These will appear on the Sonning Common Parish Council website along with the full details of the Design Day, [www.sonningcommonparishcouncil.org](http://www.sonningcommonparishcouncil.org) n

## A diamond couple

**Popular village couple Ron and Betty Brindley, who celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary earlier this year, were married in the same week that the Queen was crowned.**

And Queen Elizabeth helped to make their anniversary extra special by sending them a card, which came with a warning to the postman to deliver the card in person or else report to the palace!

The pair met at Butlin's holiday camp in Ayr and were married 18 months later.

Asked whether they thought they would ever see 60 years together, 90-year-old Ron said: "I didn't think we would even get started. I thought our holiday romance would fizzle out because I lived in London and Betty lived in Edinburgh.

"But we managed to keep seeing each other and when her mother died, Betty moved to London and we got married."

Ron and Betty have lived in Woodlands Road for the past 12 years and before that were long-term residents of Kidmore End. They are still closely involved with St John the Baptist church there.

In 1982 Ron, a former FISH bus driver, was awarded an MBE for his services to the church and the community.

Betty worked as a receptionist at Sonning Common Health Centre for many years. Her father was a member of the Scottish Antarctic Expedition of 1902-04, led by William Spiers Bruce and recently featured on a television documentary series. n



Ron and Betty Brindley with a photo of them on their wedding day and a card from the Queen to mark their diamond wedding anniversary.

### JUBILEE STREET PARTIES

**Are you holding a street party for the Queen's Jubilee and celebrating in your road? Please send photos and a write up for the next issue (by 1 July) to the magazine. [editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org](mailto:editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org)**



# The Holiday Club @ Chiltern Edge continues to grow

**The club was inspected by Ofsted this Easter and obtained a good grading.**

"Children clearly enjoy their time at this friendly and welcoming club. The staff are enthusiastic, motivated and work effectively as a team to ensure each child is valued, included and respected. Children access a suitable range of resources, activities and

outings which enable them to continue to learn and develop in a fun environment."

The Holiday Club will be running again this Summer for 4 weeks and the dates are:

**23 - 27 July, 30 July - 3 Aug, 6 - 10 Aug, 13 - 17 Aug.**

For further information and to book places please contact: Susan Bulpitt on 0118 9721500 or email [theholidayclub@chilternedge.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:theholidayclub@chilternedge.oxon.sch.uk).

■ All the children who attended 3 April 2012 is the sub heading



Photo: Henley Standard



## Re-introducing Colin Boyes our village PCSO

**Colin has returned to Sonning Common from Woodcote**

Initially, Colin will be making contact with the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators, individually, in order to introduce himself in person and to ascertain whether there are any requirements or issues that need discussion.

At this particular point in time he is focussing upon Vulnerable Person Visits. Should you be aware of any individuals who you think may benefit from such a visit, please do not hesitate to contact and provide him with their details. ■

**PCSO C8853 Colin BOYES**

**HENLEY Sector**

**Area 3**

**Mobile: 079 689 92523**

**E-mail: [colin.boyes@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:colin.boyes@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)**

# Community Arts Focus for Sonning Common

**The Village Hall in Sonning Common has recently devoted the space on the back wall for a variety of displays that celebrated the talents of the local community. Local schools have already successfully exhibited examples of their work and the space had been offered to local residents to show art and craft work throughout May.**

The project was coordinated by Sue Frayling Cork and she received a range of works that reflect the diverse talents of the local community. It has been an exciting on-going scheme making good use of the space as well as acting as a showcase for village activities. Twenty two local residents exhibited up until 20 May and there were examples of paintings, embroidery and tapestry.

We can NOW look forward to a Jubilee display. ■


**JOAN GRUMMANT**



**Last September The Village Gardeners, along with some year 7 pupils, planted 500 daffodil bulbs outside Chiltern Edge School. They made a lovely spring scene during March and brightened up an otherwise ordinary grass verge. Hopefully they will bloom year after year.**

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# Sonning Common's Olympic update

By **CHRISTINE ATKINSON**

Sonning Common Primary are very proud to have won the Oxfordshire Sportshall and are now County Champions. The athletics squad were fantastic on the day and were all 'the best they could be'. They were all given certificates, a t-shirt and a trophy to show off in our reception. We have also had some more visitors - from the world of table tennis and sailing.



## Alison Broe

Alison Broe (nee Gordon) told the juniors all about her childhood playing table tennis, how she became a professional playing for a club in France and for her country. She was four times national champion and also competed for Team GB at the Barcelona Olympics. The children all love table tennis and play on our school table regularly.



## Chris Simon

International Yachting judge and umpire Chris Simon spoke to an assembly in school about sailing in the Olympic and Paralympic Games. He described the different classes of boat, the speeds at which they can travel (up to 40 miles per hour for the fastest competitive Olympic boats) and identified the world class yachtsmen and women to look out for, in this year's Games. Britain are world leaders in this sport and it is hoped that the medal haul from the Olympic Sailing Centre in Weymouth will be impressive.

More visitors from swimming, gymnastics, canoeing and badminton will be hosting assemblies in the coming weeks.



There was a great painting session with some mums making large boards displaying all the Olympic sports for use during our Summer Fair and Sports Day. We hope to show them along the route of the torch, as it passes on its way to Henley on the 10 July. n

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# New Chiltern Way kissing gates



A total of three "Kissing Gates" funded by Goring, Woodcote & District Lions Club have replaced old and difficult to climb over stiles along the Chiltern Way. All three gates, costing £ 633 in total, were installed following consultation with local landowners by a group of volunteer members of the Chiltern Society, Rights of Way Group.

Being both a member of the Chiltern Society and the Lions Club, Mr Martin Lisk said "These new kissing gates replace old styles making it easier for people walking with disabilities to enjoy this beautiful countryside. It is an example of a Lions Club project to improve the environment and being of help to people in our local community at the same time".

The three gates are positioned along the Chiltern Way between Rushmore Lane in Woodcote and Bottom Lane in Checkendon, near Dean Wood. n



## Village Quiz results 2012

The Annual Village Quiz was held at Sonning Common Primary School on Friday 16 March. Twenty one teams took part and at the half-way stage Two Hoots had established a five point lead over Occasions. Two Hoots remained in first place all the way to the line and extended their winning margin to nine points with Graham`s Team taking second spot. The Two Hoots team was made up of Sue and Leigh Rawlins, Graham and Ann Pearce, Andy Brown and Mark Salter.

It was a most enjoyable evening and a lot of fun. I am grateful to all those who supported the quiz and my special thanks go to members of the Sonning Common Primary School PTA committee for all their help. They provided a bar and held a most successful raffle and with the surplus from the quiz raised a healthy sum which can only be good for the pupils at the school. On a personal note I thank all of those at the quiz who generously sponsored me for the Sport Relief Mile helping me towards a total of £500. The full result was as follows (out of a total of 140 points): n

<b>TWO HOOTS</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>GRAHAM`S TEAM</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>OCCASIONS</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>P&amp;O`S</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>RED HOUSE DRIVE</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>COMETS</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>FISH</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>WILD GROVERS</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>TEECHERS</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>MONGOOSES</b>	<b>106</b>
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Fred Curzon

## Sonning Common to be twinning with France?

The parish council welcomes and supports the move by a group of residents to twin the village with a similar area in France.

In the last edition of the Sonning Common magazine Douglas Kedge, Chair of the Parish Council told you about the proposed twinning of our village with a similar sized community (2 neighbouring villages) in Northern France. By the time you read this we will have visited the French community and we already know that there are around 15 families definitely interested in making a visit to Sonning Common.

So, now we would like to know who amongst you is interested in finding out more about this exciting development for our village. We invite you to come and meet us in the Studio at Sonning Common Primary School, Swimming Pool entrance on Grove Road next to the Library;

**Tuesday 10 July 2012 at 7.30 p.m.**  
**Hope to see you there! n**

**JO QUINTON, BARBARA CRAWSHAW,**  
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Thursday 14 June  
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8pm

Lucky Sods is the first play, a witty and compassionate comedy by John Godber. It is about a couple whose £2 million win on the National Lottery changes their lives forever – but at a cost.

Contact: Jenifer Titchener 0118 972 4705

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PLAYERS

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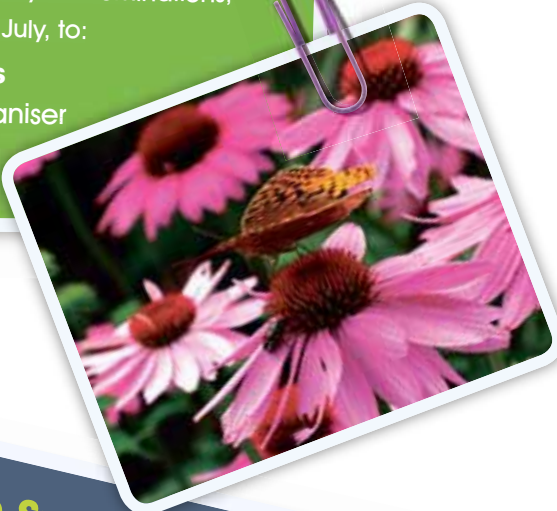
10am to 12.30pm or 2pm to 5pm  
any day

Please contact Nikki, Nadia or Mandy on 0118 970 9000

## Sonning Common Summer Front Gardens Competition

The panel of judges from Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society will be out looking for the best gardens towards the end of July. Please submit your nominations, by Saturday the 14 July, to:

**Maureen Stevens**  
Competition Organiser  
0118 972 4779



## Nottakwire Summer Celebration Saturday 30 June

Village hall, Wood lane

Performances 10 - 12 noon, 12.30 - 2.30pm, 3 - 5pm  
Tombola and Flower displays

135 tickets available, 45 per performance, £5 Adults,  
£2 children under 12

Box office: 0118 972 3586 or Occasions in Wood Lane

Tea/coffee 30p Home made food 50p  
Nottakwire aims to raise £1000 for village organisations.

## A great day out! Family garden party

Sunday 15th July  
11:30-2pm

Sonning Common Pre-School

Bouncy castle, children's entertainer, face painting, silent auction and bbq!

Come and support this fantastic local charity. All proceeds raised go towards equipment and supplies for the children attending the pre-school.





## KEEP IT CRAFTY club is back in village hall

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Contact Mrs Gwen Ryan on 07808011887

## Save the date Annual Lunch

Friday 7 September

12.30pm - Village Hall

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2010 French,  
2011 Spanish.  
2012 Locally sourced

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# *Did you know*

that the Thames Valley Gymnasium was once a school



By **CHRISTINE ATKINSON**

In 1939, amidst a country preparing itself for war, thousands of schoolchildren were evacuated from the busy cities and found themselves whisked away to much greener pastures in quiet rural villages. Some London kids had never seen a cow before, let alone lived in the countryside. Many camps were thrown up around the country to act as boarding schools, with two erected around the village of Sonning Common, north-west of Reading. They were called Kennylands Camp School, and Bishopswood Camp School. n





The Kennylands school was built by Essex County Council (hence Essex Way) and many evacuees came to the school during the war ; some for only a term or two ; some for longer. They all had to help in growing their own food and looking after the farm animals that provided eggs, milk etc. The girls and boys were taught and slept separately, coming together only for meals. There are lots of `old boys and girls` who regularly keep in contact via the internet, and have had reunions here. One of the stories mentioned walking into Reading and feeding the donkeys with their packed lunch on the way!

Kennylands school was closed in the 1980's due to the difficulty of insuring the wooden dormitory buildings. The remaining part of the school became Abbeycrest Care Home, whilst the playing fields were bought by Sibella Bonham-Carter and became the Millenium Green. There is a very interesting website – [www.nuthatchcottage.com](http://www.nuthatchcottage.com) - which has lots of information and pictures from the school. It even has the wording from the school prospectus!

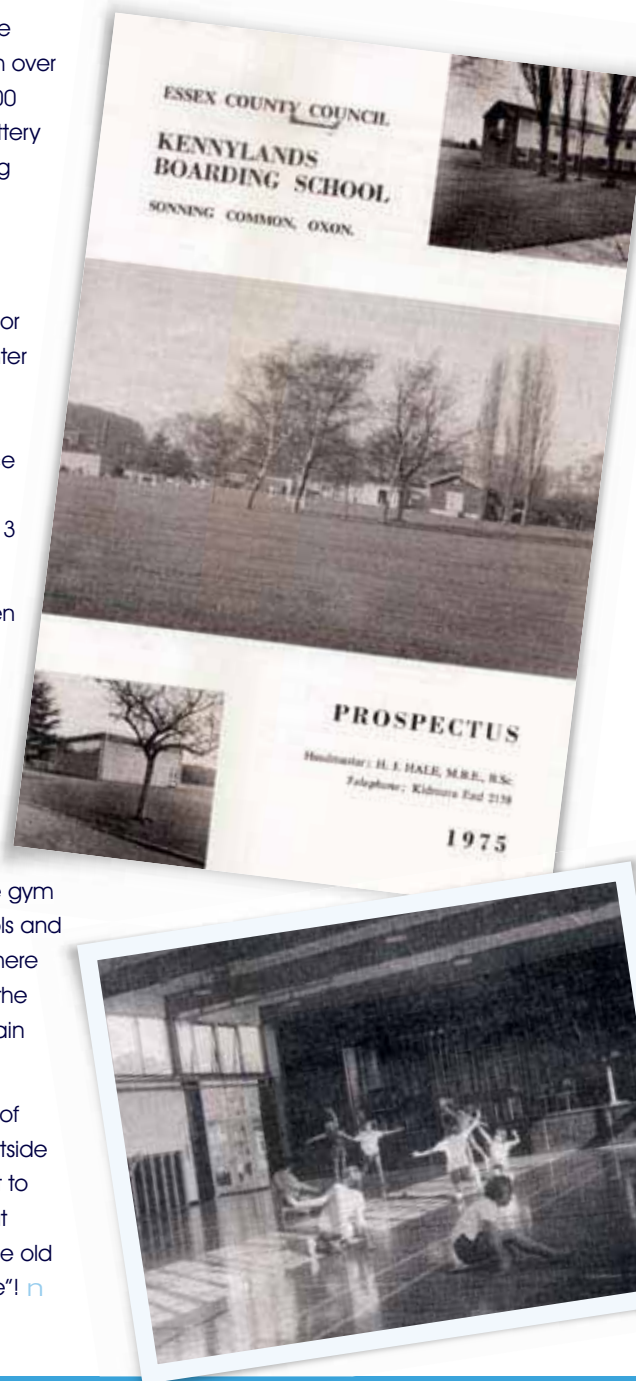
The main hall of the school was taken on by Mr and Mrs Field in 1985 who set up a gymnastics academy and called it the Dorian Centre. Unfortunately they hit financial difficulties in the nineties. Roger and Sue Newton had also started a gymnastics club at Hemdean school in Caversham as their daughter was a gymnast. They offered to take over in Sonning Common and renamed it Thames Valley Gymnastics Ltd.

The premises were in quite a bad state when they moved in, and it took them over 5 years and an investment of £380,000 to get it to the condition it is today. Lottery funding via the Foundation for Sporting Arts helped with the extension to the gymnasium, and with the new dance studio and foyer.

It reopened in 2000 with Sue as director of coaching. Roger and Sue's daughter also coaches along with her husband Kevin. Children and parents use the gym from a very early age at the twice weekly morning playgym sessions. Classes properly start from the age of 3 to 5 and go up to 17+.

The Newtons have around 340 children and young adults signed up to the gym now, and have had successful county and regional athletes. Gymnastics is probably thought of as a sport for the youngest, but the success of Beth Tweddle in the GB Team (now 27) has encouraged some to go on further in the sport. The gym has encouraged students from schools and Duke of Edinburgh schemes to help there as part of their work experience, and the gymnasts themselves can go on to train as coaches.

Sue tells a lovely story " I saw a group of men and women hanging around outside the gym, near the trees, and went out to see what they were up to. It turned out that they were a reunion party from the old Kennylands school come to reminisce"! n



## Contributed story from the Isle of Wight Libraries to the BBC WW2 website:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/45/a6954645.shtml>

When I was eleven years old – in 1943 – I went to join the Beal School at Kennylands, Kidmore End, Oxfordshire. We had five dormitories, assembly hall, a dining hall and 20 acres of ground; also our own hospital and sewage disposal plant. Academic work was supplemented by pig-rearing and bee-keeping, together with gardening. We had an adventurous time in the woods and

field nearby, but also helped out with potato picking on a local farm.

Parents came down by special coach and usually left behind food of some sort or another. We had a good share-out system, and woe betide anyone who wasn't willing to join in. Food was important to boys of our age growing up during the war.

On Saturdays we were allowed

further afield, walking Sonning, Mapledurham or Reading. The school used to provide sandwiches. These were very dry and almost inedible, so a friendly donkey down the road was happy to oblige us, and was well fed, thanks to us. Reading was about five miles away. We walked ourselves an appetite, so we could enjoy a meal of fish and chips at a Churchill restaurant. n



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*Autumn Leaf*

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# AN INTERVIEW WITH...

# Penny Snowden

By **ROS VARNES**

*For someone who couldn't do a forward roll until she was in the sixth form at senior school, Penny Snowden has certainly come a long way in sport.*

Anyone who knows Penny - the dynamic driving force behind the village's popular On Your Bike event - will find this very difficult to believe.

However, Penny freely admits she is no sportswoman, even though her whole career has been devoted to sport.

Penny first became involved with sport at the age of 13 when she qualified as an umpire for her school's netball team (because she says she was, "so desperate to be one of the sporty set"). She later became games secretary at school and subsequently trained and qualified as a PE teacher.

However, Penny never worked as a PE teacher. Instead, at the age of 22, she joined the International Amateur Athletic Federation, the IAAF, and, for the next 10 years, travelled the world organising athletics at a global level.

She took athletes to the first Goodwill Games in Moscow in 1986 and journeyed many times behind the Iron Curtain, using sport to bridge the gap between the East and West during Cold War days.

Said Penny: "They were ground-breaking times. I remember using battery-operated typewriters and communicating by telex. Sending faxes seemed impossibly advanced.

"At the time countries like Spain, Portugal and Brazil were just beginning to feature on the world's stage and using their participation in international athletics as important milestones on the road to becoming developed nations.

The emergence of the African nations, with their world-beating athletes, was only just beginning."

Although Penny never competed as an athlete, she has had a longer and more fulfilling career in sport than many of her competitor colleagues.

She is very keen to get across the message to children that sport is not just about competing. "Sport is multi-faceted," she said. "Everyone has an important part to play, from the competitor, to the coach, to the referee, to the person who hands out the oranges at the end of an event".

"I have had more of a career in sport than any of my friends who competed and for that I am eternally grateful. Sport has given me so much and I want to share its benefits with other people."

To this end Penny has been the principal organiser of a 20-week sporting programme at Sonning Common Primary School in celebration of the Olympic Games.

Representatives from around 30 different Olympic and Paralympic disciplines have been invited to speak to the children during school assemblies. Former Olympic athlete

Alan Pascoe launched the programme on a snowy morning back in January.

And a special Paralympic day is planned for 20 June when the whole school will get a chance to try a range of Paralympic sports, including boccia, sitting volleyball and goalball.

Penny's next big aim is to have an all-weather multi-sports games area installed at the primary school, where her daughter Phoebe is a pupil.

Around £50,000 is required to build the games area. Said Penny: "We still have some way to go to achieve this goal. It would be terrific if the pitch could be installed in 2012 as a legacy of the Games. If anyone knows how we could manage the funding to obtain the money to build the pitch now with a pledge to fund-raise for it afterwards, we would be delighted to hear from them."

"The better the facilities we give our children, the more chance we have that they will be fit and healthy and achieve their sporting potential. This has to be a goal for which we all strive."

Penny may be contacted via the primary school office. Email: [office.2506@sonning-common.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office.2506@sonning-common.oxon.sch.uk). Phone: 0118 972 2105.



# Tom Fort

## SHOPS

**I was brought up in Twyford in the 1950s and 60s, and I remember clearly how much of the village life – and therefore its identity – came from its shops.**

Needless to say, most important to me were the two sweetshops – Sylvesters for gobstoppers, aniseed balls, blackjacks and the like, Mrs Reed's for her sinfully wonderful treacle toffees. Next in the scheme of things was Seymour's – principally a saddler's but Mr Seymour was also secretary of the local angling club and dispensed

hooks and floats and handy advice.

There were others, all distinctive: Oxlade's, the general grocery store; the two butchers, Jennings and Franklins, in strong but genial competition; a greengrocers, a bread shop, even an antiques shop owned by the ever so slightly loopy Mr Gillett. Everyone used the local shops because everyone had always used them. No one thought about it; the shops were part of the landscape.

They are not there any more. Waitrose has driven out all the

food shops and the retail centre of Twyford is bland, dominated by Indian restaurants and estate agents.

Contrast this with Sonning Common. I am not sure people appreciate how lucky we are with our shops. It would be invidious to go through them – but how many villages in southern England can you think of that have both a first-class butchers AND the best hardware shop ever (plus bicycle repairs at the back)?

We need to cherish and nourish our shops, and think about the



precious contribution they make to village life. There is a shop for virtually all everyday needs in Sonning Common – that isn't so where I used to live. If we don't support them, then one day we will look around and they will be gone, and we will look at one another and say: what happened to our village? By which time it will be too late. n

## Parish council

## NEWS

- n The new notice boards are now in place. The locked side is to ensure that only posters for events in and around the village will be displayed. Please post through the parish clerk's letter box to the right of the village hall and he will ensure they are posted.
- n The Parish Council is seeking advice from the Highways Department regarding the design for the new bus shelter at Essex Way.
- n The Co-Op has now accepted responsibility for the car park and will start the redesign soon which should add an extra 8 or 9 car spaces.
- n The brick wall surrounding the flower bed at One Stop has been damaged by a car for the third time and will be repaired again.
- n The allotments are now all let and there is a short waiting list. A half plot may be available. Please apply to the parish clerk.
- n The Parish Clerk and several concerned residents have contacted the manager at One Stop regarding the disgraceful state of the forecourt and improvements are promised.
- n There will be the opportunity to visit Chalgrove skate park on 19 May. Please look at the notice boards for more information on the posters.

CLLR CHRISSIE PHILLIPS-TILBURY



# Church news

## ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, KIDMORE END

## CHRIST THE KING, SONNING COMMON.

During Lent, a simple lunch, held at Christ the King, raised the sum of £252, which was donated to the locally-based charity Feed the Children.

It was good to have members of other churches joining us for our Lent Course; this attracted a good attendance, and proved to be an excellent preparation for Easter, when our churches were full

for the celebration of the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ.

We thank all those who collected for and contributed to Christian Aid, during May.

The Little Lambs Group [for children under five and their parents/guardians] will have their last meeting – before their summer break – on **Wednesday 27 June, at 9.30am**, in St John's.

Enquiries to: Felicity Cooper on 0118 9477862

The Lamb and Flag is our church magazine. For only £5 per year,

a copy will be delivered to your door each month – together with a free copy of the Oxford Diocese newspaper. Enquiries to: Neil Scott on 0118 9723890

On Sunday 29 July there will be no morning service at Christ the King. Being the 5th Sunday in the month, there will, instead, be a combined Benefice service – on this occasion, at St John's Church, Kidmore End, at 11am. n

**NEIL SCOTT**

**[On behalf of the Parochial Church Council]**

# Christian Community Action *celebrates 20 years*

**20 years ago the vision of Nick Crowder was to provide practical help to those in need in Reading, so he started delivering donated furniture to the needy. The dream grew. There are now shops in Southcote, Whitley, Sonning Common and Oxford Road and a furniture outlet in Silver Street. CCA aims "to demonstrate God's love by meeting people's practical needs and restoring self-worth". This is achieved through supplying furniture, bedding and household items to the needy, providing work placements for those trying to get back into the world of work, and support centres which offer a listening ear or signposting to other agencies for specialist advice like debt counselling or benefits advice.**

The profits from the CCA shop in Sonning Common support this work. The shop was officially opened in September 2003 and has been doing good trade ever since. It is staffed by 3 paid members of staff and 26 volunteers, 8 of whom have been helping since the shop opened. Joan Bawden, one of the original volunteers, says "it is hard work but I enjoy the friendly atmosphere of the shop". She proudly boasts that 95% of goods donated are recycled. Everything is sorted in the shop. Items not purchased within four weeks are sold on to specialist buyers (for boots, books or rags). Even electrical goods, which cannot be offered for sale in the shop, are sold on for refurbishment or spares.

The shop receives lots of good quality donations but will be happy to accept more and would welcome anyone who could find time to help.

For more info visit [www.ccam.org.uk](http://www.ccam.org.uk)

**JO STOVES**





# Dear Editors of the magazine

10 April 2012

I have a confession to make, I left something anti-social on the pavement outside my house ... but don't worry, it's bio-degradable and so will disappear eventually (I believe that's a common and supposedly acceptable excuse given in such circumstances) ... the thing I left was chalked commentary on the dog poo placed perfectly on my front path by an irresponsible dog owner.

My bio-degradable anti-social markings will not transmit germs and disease if my or other children tread on it ... the dog poo will.

Surely the owner saw this? Surely they realised that this was not pleasant or pleasurable to the people living in the house whose front path was defecated on? Or am I just "over-reacting" to poo on a path?

I also have a promise to make, I promise to clean up my chalked protest "street art" as soon as the owner of the dog gets a conscience and realises such behaviour is irresponsible and anti-social and comes along with a bag to clear up. (If a responsible dog owner with a spare bag wishes to cover for their miscreant doggie community member and clean up on the bad owner's behalf I will welcome that too).

It seems a £50 fine does not deter such behaviour ... I hope my desperate act does. 

**MICHAEL WILLIAMS**  
Baskerville Road



16 April 2012

As a post script to my mail I would like to confirm no-one cleaned up the dog poo; my children have returned from their half term break with their grandparents, so I cleaned up both the poo and my protest yesterday to avoid the risk of poo transportation into my house (not so worried about chalk dust).

Whilst it is obvious my protest didn't galvanise the owner (or other dog owners) into action, I hope at least he / she and my fellow villagers will agree that mess of any kind (be it poo, chalk graffiti or litter) left around the village is not the sort of thing we wish to see and that people should clear up after themselves.

My protest was probably futile but it was intended to express dismay that if everyone just does what they want then the village degenerates very quickly.

Please, can dog owners accept their animal's waste is just as offensive as litter, graffiti, loud music or whatever it is that the majority of right minded people consider to be anti-social in nature?

**MICHAEL**

## Have you seen a UFO?

I would be very grateful if any reader of this excellent magazine would phone me on 01189 724 834 if they have ever seen a UFO. All reports are taken very seriously by myself, as an investigator working for Contact International UFO Research. I would be very grateful if you could fill in a questionnaire about your sighting. I would be more than happy to come and see you.

So far I have the following reports:

1. Seen near Chiltern Edge School Sonning Common
2. Crowsley Way Sonning Common
3. Wallingford A423
4. Rotherfield Peppard, Dog Pub

I am waiting to hear a report on light in the sky over at Bix on 29/04/2012. 

**JEREMY MELLOR**

## Two thank you letters in one

Thank you to all those people who have knitted tea cosies for our Champagne Jubilee Tea. To date I have 15 in many different patterns but all in patriotic colours of red, white and blue, left on the my door handle, pushed through my letter box, handed to my at Nottakwire, on the bus and in the library and the CCA charity shop.

I know that they will add colour and continuity to our tea party.

Thank you also to all the people who have helped me since I had my new hip. I have been overwhelmed by the kindness of people in this village - from people doing my ironing, bringing me books, plants, cards and flowers, teaching me how to knit, taking me for walks and all telling me not to do too much!

Tea cosies and new hips don't have that much in common but kindness and helping others does and it is so typical of so many people in our village.

I think that I am very lucky to live within such a caring community. 

**CHRISSE PHILLIPS-TILBURY**



# The Butcher's Arms

**"It's not like it was. Come and see for yourselves."**

**The new tenants of the Butcher's Arms want to create a pub that's the hub of the Sonning Common community.**

Ellie Gallagher and Rob Blues spent almost a year looking for the pub that was right for them before they found the Butcher's Arms.

They signed the lease in mid-February, and, over the next six weeks, restored the Brakspear pub to its original, traditional glory, commuting daily from their former home in Northampton while they did so.

The pub now has a brand new look and feel about it. They have exposed the original woodwork in the bar, re-furbished the conservatory, re-painted and laid new flooring throughout. A brand new menu now complements the great selection of beer and wine on offer.

Next on their target list is the pub's exterior which they plan to liven up by planting plenty

of flowers and re-furbishing the children's play area, just in time for summer.

New to the pub trade, Rob and Ellie met while working in corporate management roles for Tesco. Having taken a year off to travel it was during this time that they decided to do something more rewarding for themselves.

Landlady Ellie, who is originally from Ireland, said: "In the village where I grew up the local pub was at the heart of the community. Our aim is to create a traditional, community local in Sonning Common - a warm, welcoming and family-friendly place to come, relax and have a drink."

The Butcher's Arms will host a Jubilee family fun day on Saturday 2 June. A pub quiz is now held fortnightly on a Monday night, with the next one being a Jubilee special on Monday 4 June.

Private functions can be catered for and the pub is now open for morning coffee. [n](#)



## The Butcher's Arms

Blounts Court Road  
Sonning Common RG4 9RS  
Phone: 0118 972 1490

Email: [thebutchersarmspub1@gmail.com](mailto:thebutchersarmspub1@gmail.com)

## FISH (Friends in sickness and health)

### How it all began...

**I had been a Social Worker in Bury St Edmunds until we moved to Peppard Rectory in May 1976. During that time I had been involved in establishing two Volunteer Centres, designed on the 'FISH Good Neighbour Schemes'**

It was not until my husband, the clergyman, Bob Butler-Smith, discovered how difficult it was for people to get to hospital, dentists or other appointments, that I remembered them, Could I generate enough support for one here?

There are two kinds of neighbourhood help

**n Volunteer Centre:** this is a centrally based office with a co-ordinator holding a list of volunteers who are prepared to help in their community, who are then matched with people requiring help

**n Good Neighbour Scheme:** this has 2/3 co-ordinators who work from home with a list of volunteers, once again matching the needs.

These schemes were originally given the Ancient Greek Christian symbol of Ichthys 'fish'

I discussed my ideas with John Fryer, a Church warden at All Saints and after researching the possibility of funds and premises we were ready to form a steering committee. First the Chairman, I persuaded Dr Ann Barber into this position and she was very soon caught up in our enthusiasm! We then recruited the rest of the committee members.

We found difficulty in obtaining a fairly central office so we decided to start with the Good Neighbour Scheme format. Here we were very lucky in finding two individuals who were happy to join us as co-ordinators. Local Churches and the Health Centres community fund provided our immediate finance.

Having gathered, a small pool of volunteers, information was delivered to every house in the designated areas.

As the need grew, we were fortunate enough to be offered the room in the Village Hall that still serves as the 'FISH' office to-day. Caroline Aldridge became our co-ordinator

Whilst we were busy establishing the Centre, I became the Director of Bracknell Council for Voluntary Service, which in turn gave me the opportunity to initiate and guide five more such organisations in Berkshire, all using the Sonning Common 'FISH' Centre as the prototype.

Although in the beginning it was sometimes difficult to find funds and willing hands, I am so very proud of the people of this area, past and present, who have worked hard to keep it going for all these years, and have built it up to become the exceptional organisation it is today. [n](#)

**ANN BUTLER SMITH**





By MIKE MACLEOD

# SONNING COMMON garage

This is part one of the story of the two locations which now comprise Sonning Common Garage. Since the publication of Fred Richens's comprehensive book on the history of the village (The village that never was) the facilities available to the local motorist have changed and this seems a good moment to take stock before another hoard of memories disappears into the ether.

The original garage on the Peppard Road was started by Jack Callis during the First World War. Those were the days when petrol was sold out of cans. The charabanc trips, which Jack organised to the seaside and other places of interest, were a nice sideline after the war. Once he was stopped by the police for exceeding the speed limit of 12 mph. The passengers had a whip-round to pay the £5 fine.

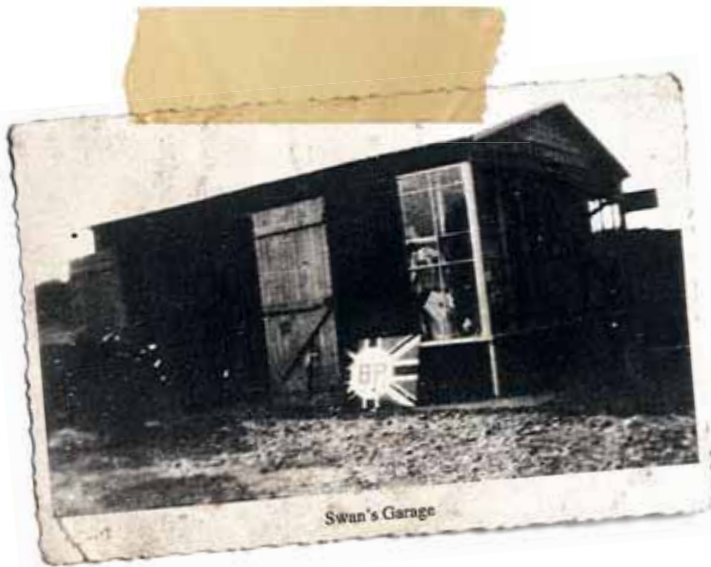
In 1946 the garage was bought by Burgess & Haynes who added a showroom, lubricating bay and spraying shop. Lawrence Harris remembers Mr Haynes being involved with the garage; he had lived in a bungalow adjacent to the garage which was demolished to make way for the new facilities. Mr Burgess himself lived opposite the school in Grove Road.

In 1961 this garage was bought by Michael Manning and not long afterwards he went into partnership with John Mullin. This lasted for about four years when John Mullin became sole owner of the garage and a Morris and MG dealer. Eventually another bungalow, owned by Mr Farrow, was demolished to give the garage still more space.

When John Mullin acquired Hill Crest Garage in about 1968 the pumps were moved and the garage became the showroom, selling Vauxhall cars. In 1984 this entire premises and a bungalow were demolished and the present building was erected. n

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MORRIS	
MORRIS 1100 Traveller De Luxe, Atlantic beige	£711
MORRIS 1100 Automatic Saloon, Trafalgar blue	£747
MORRIS 1000 Traveller De Luxe, rose taupe	£616
MORRIS 1000 De Luxe Saloon, maroon	£575
MORRIS 1100 De Luxe Saloon, Trafalgar blue	£655
MORRIS Mini Traveller, wooden battens, green	£564
MORRIS Mini Traveller, wooden battens, blue	£564
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1964 VAUXHALL Victor Estate Car, one private owner, 4-speed gearbox, radio, heater, fog light, green with green interior, very clean condition	£475
1965 (October) JAGUAR 2.4 De Luxe Saloon, overdrive, 1966, heater, one lady owner, genuine 15,000 miles, only black with red interior, immaculate condition. A saving of £550 off new price	£965
1964 AUSTIN 1100 De Luxe Saloon, heater, screenwashers, red with brown interior, very clean	£415
1964 AUSTIN A.80 De Luxe Saloon, heater, screenwashers, maroon with brown interior	£445
1964 VAUXHALL Viva De Luxe Saloon, wire mirrors, heater, 4-wheelers, grey with grey interior	£345
1964 AUSTIN Mini De Luxe Saloon, one private owner, heater, screenwashers, red with red interior, immaculate	£315
1963 MORRIS 1100 De Luxe Saloon, heater, screenwashers, wire mirrors, grey with red interior, clean condition	£345
1963 MORRIS Mini Cooper Saloon, one private owner, heater, screenwashers, steel belts, shell, Columbia tyre, white with red interior	£380
1963 WOLSELEY Haaret Mk. II Saloon, heater, screenwashers, duo-grey with red interior	£325
1962 M.G. Midget, heater, screenwashers, bonnet cover, red with red interior, clean condition	£345
1962 (Model) HILLMAN Super Mini Saloon, heater, screenwashers, red/white with grey interior, clean condition	£345
1961 FORD Anglia De Luxe Saloon, heater, wire mirrors, maroon with grey interior, very clean condition	£280





The Sonning Common Garage near Sedgewell Road, from which petrol is now sold, was originally Swan & Sons Garage. In 1923 "old" Sidney Swan opened a cycle business in a wooden shed near the present site of the National Westminster Bank. The garage was set up by the road and the shed became the office where there was a desk and a typewriter. An old photograph shows clothes hanging in the window so Mrs Swan must have sold them from there at some point. However, Mrs Swan also sold drapery and millinery from the front room of her house next door, and eventually from a shop where the bank is now situated. Sidney Swan began to sell paraffin and petrol, and recharged accumulators which were used in valve wireesses at that time; he also serviced cars and owned 2 cars for hire. There were three locked garages on Sedgewell Road: two were for the hire cars and one for a fire engine kept by the Auxiliary Fire Service during the war.

When they got married in 1955 John and Eileen Earle made use of the hire service on their wedding day. Trevor Swan (who was chauffeur at Wyfold Court before the war) first drove John to Kidmore End Church and then went back to pick up Eileen. Trevor refused to take payment saying it was a wedding present for the couple. John and Eileen ran the Hare and Hounds from the time of their marriage until about 1977, and they still live in Sedgewell Road.

Plans to rebuild the garage business were made in 1939 but the war put a stop to the development for the time being. After

the war Sidney Swan and his sons built the house which was also used as Mrs Swan's drapery shop, and eventually became The National Westminster Bank. They also rebuilt the garage which now sold Austin cars in addition to petrol and servicing.

When they retired Mr and Mrs Swan lived in Caversham but missed Sonning Common and returned to Sedgewell Road where they built a bungalow, number 1, and a tennis court on the site of the three lock-up garages. This later became the car park for the bank.

John Mullin took over Swan's Garage in 1984/85. The business was run with John Mullin as Chairman, Phillip Mullin as Managing Director and servicing, and Paul Mullin responsible for the showroom.

For their help I would like to thank John and Eileen Earle, Lawrence Harris, Jill Kendal, John Mullins, Roger Parker, and also Ann Thiam for permission to use the photograph. [n](#)

## Smith's Motor Garage

Today the Free Church stands opposite Sonning Common Garage showroom. However, this was originally the site of a cycle shop started by Edward Long in 1915 in a shed on the corner of Peppard and Grove Roads. Later he moved to the former Hare and Hounds (opposite the present one) in Sedgewell Road and repaired cycles in the living room. He moved

to Wychwood Close (off Wood Lane) where he worked from a small hut, later used by Heath & Watkins when they took over the business in 1938.

Meanwhile the original cycle shop on Peppard Road had become a tea room (though the photograph of it as Smith's Motor Garage); this was owned by Mr Raymond who made sweets for the tea shop in his home in Grove Road. Lawrence Harris recalls buying a large bag of sweet dust and chippings from Mr Raymond for half a penny or sometimes a full (old) penny. The photograph shows Sidney Gordon Smith who ran the garage with his brother Claud.

For the use of the photograph I would like to thank Ann Thiam. [n](#)





# JUST FOR KIDS

## Hello everybody.

Lot's has happened in our local area since the last issue – we've had surprise visitors, a musical interlude and a community bike ride!

I hope you enjoy reading about them here. Please remember to keep sending in all your news and reviews to [junior\\_editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org](mailto:junior_editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org), so that I can include them on this page. n

**ANOUSKA Junior Editor**



## Surprise Visitors

At the crossroads that lead from Sonning Common into Kidmore End, we have recently had some surprise visitors. Did you see them? There were a few clucks during the process of taking a picture, but I managed it in the end!

Do you know where the chicken is now?



## International Ukulele Club of Sonning Common

I was lucky enough to see the Ukulele group perform in Nettlebed, because my auntie was playing, and it was brilliant! Next time they have a concert, try and get a ticket as everybody had lots of fun. Or ask your parents to take you to the Cornbury festival where they are playing in June. n

## The Secret Village

I hope you had fun guessing where the last secret village picture was from. I can now reveal the answer is the bell at the front of Sonning Common library. Well done if you got it right. If not, better luck this time! Can you guess where this photograph was taken? The first person to email me the right answer will win £5 worth of sweets, kindly donated by The Co-op. Good luck!



## ON YOUR BIKE



I expect lots of you took part in this, and if you didn't make sure you sign up next year as it's great fun for all the family. We cycled the shortest route as my youngest brother is only 4, but next year I hope we can cycle for longer. It's a very pretty route and you get to see lots of wildlife. I spotted lots of deer.

## BOOK REVIEWS

**FOR YOUNGER READERS: Mrs Pepperpot Minds The Baby by Alf Proysen and Hilda Offen.**

I like this book because the pictures are colourful and the story made me laugh. It's funny when Mrs Pepperpot shrinks and the baby is very naughty. (Izzy Everett, age 6)

**FOR OLDER READERS: Matilda by Roald Dahl.**

Matilda is a clever and magical little girl, who meets a range of vivid characters – some lovely and some awful. The first time I read it, I wanted to read it again and again. (Milly Woods, age 9)

**FOR ADVANCED READERS: The Subtle Knife by Philip Pullman.**

This is the second novel in the His Dark Materials series and continues the adventures of Lyra Belacqua. It's really exciting and the plot keeps you gripped. (Sam Roberts, Age 10)



# Your Skate Park needs you!

The years of waiting for a Skate park may soon be over. The skaters of Sonning Common may very soon be following in Tony Hawk's wheel marks!

Allowing for a few 'legal bits' to be sorted out, the Parish Council is confident purchase of the site will go ahead as soon as a design is approved.

The skate park was on the agenda of the village design day. As many as 20 ClubSC members attended the Design Day some with their parents and others just scooting in!!

They soon found the place where all the action was taking place, a table, drawing paper and some practical

advice was all that was needed for them to immerse themselves into all types of different designs to help with the forthcoming plans for the skate board park. Designs were drawn up and ideas shared.

Fuelled with drinks and snacks, they all put their names down to visit the new dedicated Skate Park at Chalgrove. This soon developed into the theme name of "Ticket-to-Ride".

The Parish Council will be setting up a steering group to help choose a design. So your help is needed if you are a potential skate park user. All you have to do is... VOLUNTEER.

In the next magazine there will be more feedback from the future discussions. n

**NICK MOORE**

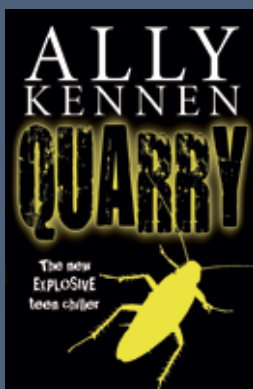


## BOYS

### BOOK CLUB

#### QUARRY

by Ally Kennen



The story is about a boy called Michael aka Scrappy who is given dares by text. If he meets the challenges he is rewarded with money. Unfortunately he doesn't realise that the dares will get more and more dangerous and that he will have to risk his life to save his sister. It is a story about trust and betrayal and also about what is bravery.

**ADAM SAYS:** This was an average book that gets better as it goes on. I would recommend this book to boys 12 and over.

**SCOTT SAYS:** This was a well written book that is full of mystery and adventure. I would recommend this book to people aged 11 and over.

**HARRY SAYS:** This is a very good book with lots of detail and adventure. I liked this book and I would recommend it for ages 12-16. There is an unexpected ending but you will have to read it to find out! n

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July

<b>FRIDAY</b> <b>1</b> <b>Full Nottakwire practice</b> Village Hall: 9.45 - 11.30am <b>Keep it crafty club</b> Village Hall: 7 - 9pm	<b>SUNDAY</b> <b>3</b> <b>Queen's Diamond Jubilee champagne tea party</b> Village Hall 3pm	<b>MONDAY</b> <b>4</b> <b>FISH - Garden Centre Visit</b> 1.30pm	<b>WEDNESDAY</b> <b>6</b> <b>20Notts singing group practice</b> Village Hall 3 - 5pm
<b>FRIDAY</b> <b>8</b> <b>Full Nottakwire practice</b> Village Hall: 9.45 - 11.30am <b>Keep it crafty club</b> Village Hall: 7 - 9pm	<b>THURSDAY</b> <b>14</b> <b>Chiltern Players. Open play reading evening. Everybody welcome.</b> The Reformation, Gallowstree Common 8pm	<b>FRIDAY</b> <b>15</b> <b>Full Nottakwire practice</b> Village Hall: 9.45 - 11.30am <b>Keep it crafty club</b> Village Hall: 7 - 9pm	<b>SATURDAY</b> <b>16</b> <b>A Summer Concert performed by The Southbank Trio</b> All Saints' Church, Rotherfield Peppard 7.30pm
<b>MONDAY</b> <b>18</b> <b>Sonning Common Parish Council</b> Village Hall 8pm	<b>THURSDAY</b> <b>21</b> <b>FISH - Pub lunch</b> 11.30am <b>WI - Social evening</b> Village Hall: 7.30pm	<b>FRIDAY</b> <b>22</b> <b>Full Nottakwire practice</b> Village Hall: 9.45 - 11.30am <b>Keep it crafty club</b> Village Hall: 7 - 9pm	<b>SATURDAY</b> <b>23</b> <b>20Notts singing group practice</b> Village Hall 10am - 12noon
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> <b>27</b> <b>20Notts singing group practice</b> Village Hall 1 - 3pm	<b>FRIDAY</b> <b>29</b> <b>Full Nottakwire dress rehearsal day</b> Village Hall	<b>SATURDAY</b> <b>30</b> <b>Summer Celebration Day with Nottakwire</b> Village Hall 1) 9.45 - 12noon 2) 12.15 - 2.30pm 3) 2.45 - 5pm	
<b>MONDAY</b> <b>2</b> <b>FISH - Garden Centre Visit</b> 1.30pm	<b>FRIDAY</b> <b>6</b> <b>20Notts singing group practice</b> Village Hall: 10am - 12noon <b>Keep it crafty club</b> Village Hall: 7 - 9pm	<b>FRIDAY</b> <b>13</b> <b>Full Nottakwire practice</b> Village Hall 9.45 - 11.30am	<b>SUNDAY</b> <b>15</b> <b>Sonning Common Pre-School summer garden party</b> Sonning Common Pre-School 11.30am - 2pm
<b>MONDAY</b> <b>16</b> <b>Sonning Common Parish Council</b> Village Hall 8pm	<b>WEDNESDAY</b> <b>18</b> <b>Peppard Hall Concert Group practice (Nottakwire)</b> Village Hall 9.30 - 12noon	<b>THURSDAY</b> <b>19</b> <b>FISH - Pub lunch</b> 11.30am <b>WI (SC) - "Seated Exercise" with Jeanette Hughes</b> Visitors welcome Village Hall: 7.30pm	<b>FRIDAY</b> <b>20</b> <b>Keep it crafty club</b> Village Hall 7 - 9pm
<b>MONDAY</b> <b>23</b> <b>Holiday Club starts (Mon - Fri for 4 weeks)</b> Chiltern Edge	<b>FRIDAY</b> <b>27</b> <b>Full Nottakwire practice &amp; end of term lunch</b> Village Hall <b>Keep it crafty club</b> Village Hall: 7 - 9pm		

June





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